Marital Status – Reference Guide
Version 1.0, December 1999

Summary: Marital Status

Definition

Legal marital status of person.

Data Storage and Field Values

There is 1 data element used to define the data concept Marital Status. The variable name noted below specifically applies to the Marital Status of the subject of the report. Variable names for other uses of Marital Status, such as Marital Status of a contact, are not discussed in this document but will be discussed in subsequent releases.

Variable Name:	MARITAL
Type:	character
Length:	1
Reported to CDC:	Yes
Field Values:	A - Separated
	D - Divorced
	M - Married
	S - Single and Never Married
	W - Widowed

Missing Values

If the value of the Marital Status data element is missing, or does not adhere to the CIPHER standard, the data element may be noted as blank to indicate a missing value. If the program requires the reason the value is missing, a separate 1-character field should be used to note the reason for the missing data. The use of a Missing Value Reason data element must adhere to the CIPHER definition and rules associated with missing data as described in Appendix I - Missing Value Reason.

Processing Overview

No special requirements.

EDI Summary

EDI sections are under construction.

Discussion

The Marital Status data element is defined and structured to collect the legal marital status of a person. Programs needing to address particular circumstances (e.g., Registered Domestic Partner, Common-law Marriage, Living Together and Not Married) are encouraged to define program-specific fields/variables to support these data needs.

In addition, when encountering these particular circumstances, a program can choose to note the CIPHER-defined Marital Status data element as missing (i.e., blank). An appropriate missing value reason (MVR) may be stored in the associated Missing Value Reason variable to indicate why the CIPHER-defined Marital Status datum is missing, and to describe the special circumstances associated with the marital status of the subject through use of program-defined MVR codes/definitions.

Implementation: Marital Status

The implementation examples noted below specifically apply to the Marital Status of the subject of the report. The implementation for other uses of Marital Status, such as Marital Status of a contact, can be patterned after these implementation examples.

Data Collection: Hardcopy Report Form

Check-box fields on the hardcopy report form are used for the collection Marital Status data. The reporter can check or mark the box noting the appropriate marital status category. Refer to Figures 1 and 2 below:

Figure 1:   Blank Hardcopy Form section used to collect Marital Status

Marital Status
(select one)

☐ A - Separated

☐ D - Divorced

☐ M - Married

☐ S- Single and Never Married

☐ W - Widowed

Figure 2:   Completed Hardcopy Form section used to collect Marital Status

Marital Status
(select one)

☐ A - Separated

☐ D - Divorced

☑ M - Married

☐ S- Single and Never Married

☐ W - Widowed

Missing Values – Hardcopy Form

Examples of hardcopy forms using the associated Missing Value Reason data element can be found in Appendix I – Missing Value Reason. The hardcopy form need only contain a missing value reason if the program requires the rationale for a missing value for Marital Status.

Data Entry: Electronic Forms

A pull-down menu displays the valid entry options, which parallel the options noted on the hardcopy collection report form. See Figures 3, 4, and 5 below. The portion of the valid entry options located outside the parentheses reflects the data that are stored.

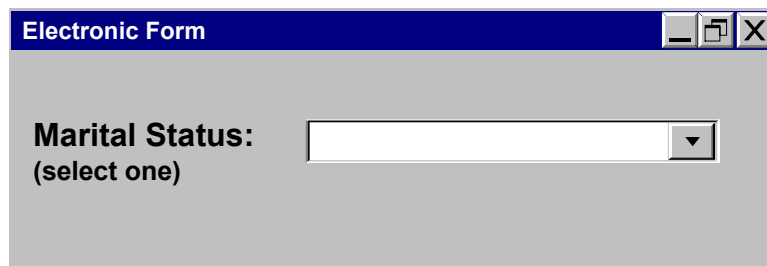**Figure 3:**   **Blank Electronic Form used to collect Marital Status**

Figure 4:   **Blank Electronic Form used to collect Marital Status, pull-down menu enabled**
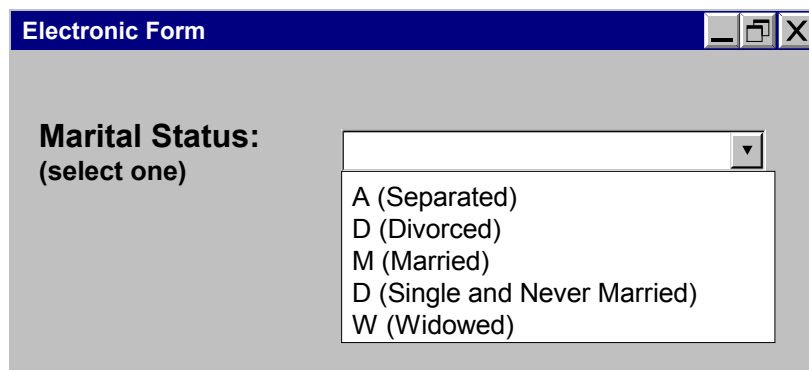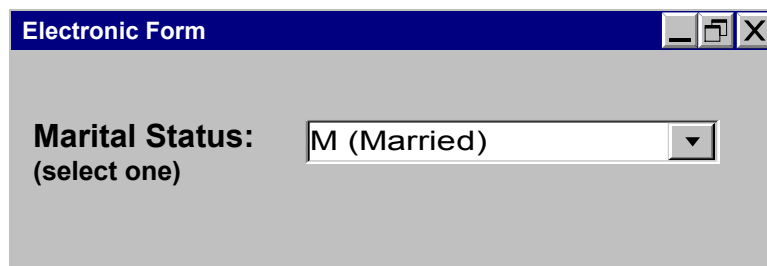
Figure 5:   **Completed Electronic Form used to collect Marital Status**

Missing Values – Electronic Form

Examples of electronic forms using the associated Missing Value Reason (MVR) data element can be found in Appendix I – Missing Value Reason. The electronic form needs to handle the Missing Value Reason only if the program requires the rationale for a missing value for Marital Status. If the user selects a missing value reason code during data entry, the Marital Status field will be blank and the screen will display the MVR information next to the blank field.

Data Processing: Validations and Edit Checks

Data elements entered in the electronic form will be edited as outlined below. If the program elects to use an associated Missing Value Reason data element for Marital Status, it will be edited as outlined in Appendix I – Missing Value Reason.

 Marital Status:
▪ Alpha only
▪ Valid values for the 1-character field are 'A', 'D', 'M', 'S', and 'W'

Data Processing: From Hardcopy to Storage

The following example illustrates the flow of information from data collection on the hardcopy form, to data entry into the electronic form, to validations and storage in the database.

The process begins with the blank Hardcopy data collection form used to collect Marital Status:

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The Marital Status information is captured on the form, creating a completed Hardcopy data collection form:

↓

The process continues with a blank Electronic form/data entry screen used to capture Marital Status:

↓

The value from the hardcopy form is entered into the Electronic form/data entry screen (with the use of drop-down lists of valid values) and then the edits and validations are performed on Marital Status:

↓

The completed Electronic form/data entry screen is redisplayed and Marital Status is stored in the database:

Electronic Form   _ □ X

Marital Status: M (Married)   ▼
(select one)

Database Storage

Variable:	*MARITAL*
Type:	character
Length:	1
Stored Value:	**M**

Data Transmission: Electronic Data Interchange

Note: EDI sections are under construction.